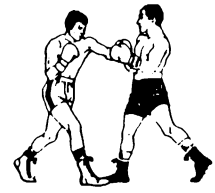
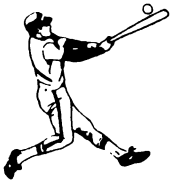
Murder Can Be Fun®

No. 7 — $2.98

I HATE SPORTS





Special Issue

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This is a first. Promised for September, here's MCBF in mid-August. Not only does this set a personal record, but when's the last time you heard of any grubby little 'zine being other than "sorry, I'm late"?

Of course, this anti-athletic theme was child's play to put together. Sports? Yeeech! I had to exercise some self restraint to keep this from turning into a double, or even triple, ish. As it was, two articles I'd planned on couldn't fit, & during my research, I discovered a few more juicy tidbits. Samples: Football fatalities; college basketball betting scandals; soccer riots; the "Football War"; the antics of the Stanford Marching Bands; and, boxing deaths. Oops, forgot the dozens of sports-related disasters. Expect a "I Hate Sports" #2 one of these days.

But until then, I've got a few more surprizes up my sleeve. I'll be taking a quick break to work on my other sneaky projects, so #9 won't be out till November/December. Tenatively scheduled is a bit on big Ed Kemper who shut his nagging mother up by chopping out her larynx & stuffing it down the garbage disposal. And of course, there'll be the usual garbage too, about disasters & books. It ain't gonna be a ROLLING STONE with an attitude rip.

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SEE HEAR Catalog - $1 to 59 E. 7th St./ New York, NY 10003
See Hear sounds like a very cool place, even if it wasn't the only retail outlet for MCBF in North America. They carry just about every grubby little fanzine & magazine you can think of, especailly if it has something to do with Punk Rock. Also some cool books, videos, and tapes which you will not find at your local mall. Of course, all this can be ordered via the convenience of mail. Essential.

PM MAGAZINE - card to PO Box 3100/ New York, NY 10164
At first glance, this looks like another "in-flight" mag with all these nice little articles blabbing about wonderful bits of Americana. Then, you notice it's published by cigarette manufacturer Philup Morris, Inc, & the last few pages are devoted to the "smoker as nigger", poor souls being persecuted by mindless healthnuts for an innocent, harmless little habit. Delusion in action.

INSURANCE INFORMATION INSTITUTE - card to 110 William St/ New York, NY 10038
As far as I'm concerned, the liability crises is just another gimmick to jack up NY Life's profits, but these folks will be quite happy to send you a pound of nonsense saying otherwise.

THE LIBERTY REPORT - card to The Liberty Foundation/ 2020 Tate Springs Rd.,/ Lynchburg, VA 24501
This is the paper of the political arm of good ol' Jerry Falwell & the Moral Majority. Guaranteed to be at least one laugh per page as a hired gun shrink blames teen suicide on folks not toeing the MM party line. You've gotta sound pious when you write & mention that you saw the free 1-year sub offer in CONSERVATIVE DIGEST. If you return the post-paid donation card (sans cash, of course!), you'll get your very own personalized Moral Majority Membership card.

Government stuff - card to Consumer Info Center/ Dept. T.D./ Pueblo, CO 81009
Gone are the days when you could get the Feds to send you junk by the pound for free, but you can still find some real fun stuff for very little money in this catalog. Especially recommended are the comic books with tips for dumb kids on how not to kill 'em selves (drink coke, not shoe polish).

PANDEMONIUM #2 - $9 from Jack Stevenson/ 171 Auburn St, St. 11/ Cambridge, MA 02139
Haven't seen it yet, but it's sure to be worth it. Letters, interviews & photos with all your faves: John Hinckley, John Waters, Mink Stole, Squeaky Fromme, John Gacy, etc., all never before published. Jack got sued for #1, so don't fuck around. Get to Jack before Hinckley's lawyer does.

MURDER CAN BE FUN is published almost quarterly by Johnny Marr when he runs out of $$$ to finance his used bookstore shopping sprees & pay his library fines. All contents, with the exception of previously published bits, are copyright 1987 by the aforementioned Mr. Marr, who is usually quite generous with reprint rights if you say please & catch him in a good mood. Subscriptions continue to be $1 for two issues - CASH ONLY. That means federal legal tender green, not checks, not money orders. MCBF is available at discount for bulk quantities for resale. Apprecition due this time to Eloise, SduP, Frank, Dan, Al, & the Alox Manufacturing Company.

Sale

The 1919 Chicago

Black Sox

Next to selling atomic bomb secrets to the Russians, fixing & throwing the World Series is about the most un-American thing a guy can do. We're talking about big-time corruption of a truly sacred institution -- witness the uproar these days over a few players doing an occaisonal line of coke. Baseball players are supposed to be the flower of American youth, wholesome players of the most All-American of games, and any suggestion to the contrary labels the speaker as a goddamnpinko-liberal atheistic commie. These young gods being tempted by a few miserly pieces of silver? Hah! They'd just as soon sell their souls to old Nick himself! Never!

It really takes at least 180,000 pieces of silver, at least back in 1919. Eight members of the heavily favored Chicago White Sox charged gamblers this to roll over & play dead during the 1919 fall classic with the Cincinnati Reds, and didn't even get an asterik (*-Series results fixed by gamblers) for their troubles. Today, people have almost forgotten this juciest of scandals except for the player's snappy nickname, the Black Sox, and that even snappier quote, the tear-faced gamin pleading "say it ain't so, Joe."

It's just as well for the players involved that people've forgotten the dtails. The 1919 Series was a positive embarrasment to everyone. It was a textbook case of how not to throw a world series.

The whole scheme was so half-assed & flaky from day one, it's a wonder the players went through with it. They didn't get paid in advance liked they'd specified, and ended up getting stiffed for over half the $$. The fix was such an open secret that the line swung over to favor the out-classed Cincinnati Reds. Even the players got confused over whether the fix was on or off, & went out & won a few games that wiped out their backers. And when the shit hit the fan, everyone had his version of the 3-ring circus to tell.

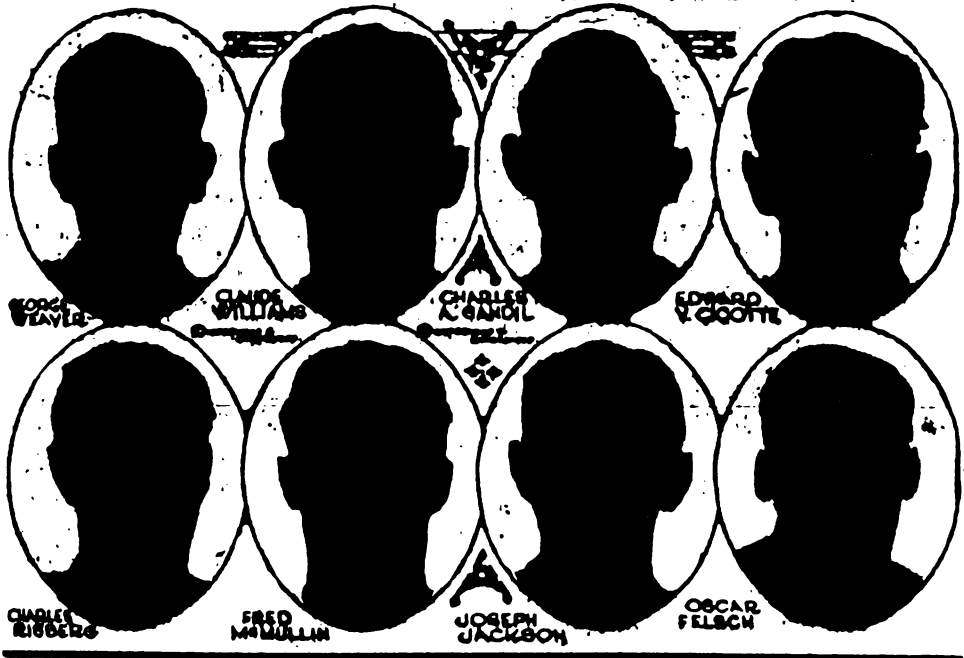
Most tales point to Chick Gandil, the White Sox 1st baseman, as the originator of the plot. The team was "rife with dissension". Besides being incredibly underpaid by owner Charles Cominsky, the team was split up into factions & hardly spoke to each other off the field.

Gandil had no trouble recruiting 7 key players who either needed a little pocket change or just wanted to screw over Cominsky (see inset). He had equally good like finding backers. One group, headed by Joeseph "Sport" Sullivan was to cough up $80,000 cash in advance. The other, headed by Bill Burns, was paying $100,000 in advance. Neither group knew of the other. Sneaky guy, that Chick, eh?

The trouble started because neither gambler had any money, much less $180,000. They both ended up turning to the only man anyone thought could pull it off -- the "Big Bankroll", Arnold Rothstein.

Rothstein was the original Mr. Big. A multi-millionaire gambler & financier of shady businesses, he basically ran New York City. He could sell you anyone, from a beat cop clear up to a judge, and probably give you a discount for a dozen. He owned the big gambling clubs, controlled the bootleg whiskey, and

PLAYERS INDICTED IN BASEBALL SCANDAL



taught the secrets of the trade to all the young mafioso. If anyone would back the fix, it'd be A.R.

Burns got to A.R. first, but he was less than impressed. It looked like trouble: too many people, too many amateuers. He declined. However, one of his aides, Abe Attel, saw possiblities. Get rich quick! He told Burns that A.R. would back him, but planned to do it himself.

Of course, A.R. heard about Attel's little scheme, and so when Sullivan approached him, he decided to get in to make sure the thing would go off. He sent another (more trustworthy) aide, Nat Evans with $80,000 for Sullivan -- $40,000 before the Series, and $40,000 after.

Now, did Sullivan play it straight & turn the $40,000 over to the players like a good boy? Of course not. He only gave 'em $10,000, promising them the rest later. The remaining $30,000 was his bankroll & went on Cincinnati to win.

That first $10,000 went straight to 29-game winning pitcher Eddie Cicotte, who was slated to start the first game. Of the "$180,000, cash in advance" promised to 8 players, only one had gotten anything.

But, brilliantly, they threw the first game anyway. The series opened in Cincinnati on Oct. 1. As a pre-arranged gesture of good faith, Cicotte drilled the lead-off batter with a fastball, right between the shoulder blades. The fix was on! The Sox ace then proceeded to be bombed for 6 runs before being pulled in the 4th inning. The White Sox lost, 9 - 1.

After the game, Gandil tried to squeeze a few bucks more out of the gamblers without any luck. Sullivan had wisely made himself scarce. Attel claimed all the money was out on bets, but produced a telegram signed "A.R." (which he'd sent to himself, natch) promising $20,000 tomorrow.

If nothing else, the Black Sox had faith, enough to go out the next day and lose again. Lefty Williams, the starting pitcher, did his bit by walking 3 batters in one inning. The White Sox lost againg, 4-2. Williams was later attacked by catcher Ray

Schalk (not in on the fix) for fucking up so bad.

The players lucked out, finally. Attel saw to giving 'em $10,000, and informing them that henceforth they'd get $20,000 after each loss (back then, the series was 5 of 9), conveniently forgetting that he was already $30,000 behind. He was also critical of their inept throwing technique because it was swinging the odds over to Cincinnati, and suggested that they might try winning for a change in game 3. Gandil kept the entire $10,000 to himself.

The players were a bit sick of this lack of cash, so they went out & won the next game, 3-0. This caught Burns by surprise - he'd had all his money on the Reds. He was wiped out. He tried to get $20,000 out of Attel to pay off the players before the next game, but Attel refused. Pay 'em after was his motto. Gandil replied, no dice. As far as Burns & Attel, the fix was over.

But Sullivan finally came through with the promised $20,000, which was split between Risberg, Felsch, Williams, & Jackson. He also promised, with no intention of delivery, an additional $20,000 after the next game.

This was good enough to keep the Black Sox happy. Cicotte pitched a masterful 4th game - just bad enough to still look good & lose 2 - 0, although he did have to help things along with a pair of errors. In the 5th game, Felsch did his bit by coming through with an error in the clutch to allow the Sox to lose, 4 - 0.

Once more, Sullivan made himself scarce for a good reason. The Sox finally came to their senses - screw the fix, so were down 4 - 1, let's go out & win the sucker! They took the next 2, 5-4, & 4-3, & people started to think that they would pull it out.

Back in New York, Arnold Rothstein found this prospect to be extremely annoying, seeing as how he had several hundred thousand on the Reds. He had the elusive Sullivan tracked down & brought in, and informed that things appeared to be getting out of hand. He suggested that Sullivan arrange to have the series end tomorrow, preferably in the 1st inning.

Sullivan, scared shitless, had an "enforcer" friend of his pay a friendly visit to Williams. Williams got the idea that, if he wanted to go on living, he'd fuck up the 1st inning. Very badly.

Williams understood. The next day, he threw just 15 pitches. Vary badly. The Reds shelled him for 4 runs before he was pulled, and the Sox went on to lose, 10-5, and the Series, 5 - 3.

Sullivan came through with the final $40,000, of which Gandil kept $25,000. Final tabs: Gandil, $35,000; Risberg $15,000; Cicotte, $10,000; and McMullin, Felsch, Williams, and Jackson $5000 each. Weaver had dropped out, played to win, & got nothing.

It wasn't worth it. The scandal broke towards the end of the 1920 season & the shit hit the fan. The players were brought to trial on conspiracy charges (not the gamblers!) & found innocent on a technicality - they may have thrown games, but to be a crime, they would have had to conspire to defraud the public. This was carefully orchestrated by baseball management, with the players not being allowed to take the stand in their defense. Afterwards, baseball could be purged of its bad boys, in the public eye, simply by excommunicating the 8 from organized ball forever.

And excommunicated they were. None of the 8 ever played a pro game again, though Weaver had had no part in the fix, and there was a good chance that Jackson was, too. He'd hit .375 & made no errors in his efforts at allegedly throwing the Series. Thus was avoided exposure of widespread fixing in the big leagues. Give 'em a few scapegoats & everyone's happy.

★ ★ ★ Dying for the Team, pt. 1: Track ★ ★ ★

FASTER, KATHY FASTER!

Ormsby (113) had been near the lead.

Kathy Ormsby was enough to make anyone sick.

She was the type of person, back in high school, that was just too perfect. She had a 994 scholastic average, was class valedictorian, and a track star. She set North Carolina state records in the 800, 1600, and 3200 meter runs. In her senior year, not only did they hold a special (yeech!) "Kathy Ormsby Day" to honor her, but they also retired her jersey, the first in her school's history.

Her nauseating ways continued in college at North Carolina State, which she attended under a combination of athletic & academic scholarships. Her physics professor recalled, "She is the model student athelete". Majoring in pre-med, as a junior, she was on the dean's list, as well as being a star long-distance runner on the track team. On April 24th, 1986, she had set a new women's intercollegite record in the 10,000 run: 32:36.2. As a very devout Christian, she told a reporter after

☆ ☆

the race, "I just have to learn to do my best for myself & for God & turn everything over to him".

As it turned out, a very bad choice of philosophies. Either she wasn't clever enough to learn how to do her best, or she was just putting things in the wrong diety's hands. In less than 6 weeks, her track career would end forever.

It was at the NCAA Championships in Indianapolis, the most important race of the year. On the night of June 4th, Kathy was running in the 10,000 meter finals. For the 1st 6500 meters, it was just another race. Kathy was part of a group of 4 which had pulled away from the pack. Then, the group started to pull away from her. She dropped several strides behind the leader. She started to panic. She felt like she was hardly moving, like "she wasn't getting anywhere". She later recalled, "I saw what was happening as failing God. I felt like I was failing my coach, & my parents."

Pretty heavy trip there. She did the only thing that, logically, she could. While the rest of the pack headed into the back curve, she kept straight - under a barrier, up the stands, across a baseball stands, and over a 7-foot chain link fence.

In the stadium, Stephanie Herbst of Wisconsin was winning the race, and smashing Kathy's record, with a time of 32:32.75. But Kathy wasn't caring. She was now running along busy New York Avenue, "running harder that I had during the race".

About ½ mile from the stadium, NY Ave. crosses the White River. This was Kathy's final finish line. When she reached the bridge, she climbed over the guardrail and dived headfirst onto the bank 35 feet below.

She was lucky. She only broke a rib & fractured her spine in a few places - just enough so she won't have to ever worry about running (or walking) again. Acorrding to doctors, from that height she's lucky she didn't end up a quadraplegic or a corpse.

She spent the next two months in the hospital getting patched together physically & mentally. The psychiatrists called it a panic attack, a specific type of mental disorder where a person under pressure cracks, disassociates, & kind of watches themselves freak out. Kathy was a hardcore perfectionist who felt when she lost, she let everyone down: teammates, coaches, parents, even God. Now that's pressure!

Trotting along New York Avenue, Kathy recalled, "I just ran. And I just don't feel like that person was me. I know that sounds strange, but I was just out of control. I just couldn't face everybody. I felt like I had let everybody down." And on the bridge: "I know that when I went off I was headed down head first. But I also know that part of me, the part that was me, remembers apologizing to God and Saying I'm sorry."

This was not the first time she'd cracked. It had happened in several races earlier in the year, but she had just collapsed. It took the biggest race of the year to cause the really dramatic response. And of course, no one had ever even thought of Kathy quitting the team. Golly, that'd be letting down her teammates, her coah, her parents, God....

At last report in December, as her coach said, "She's doing quite well". Confined to a wheelchair for life, she plans on returning to classes at NC State to either become a minister or medical missionary. (Possibly squaring things with God for fucking up?). Brilliantly, her father observed: "I believe that it had something to do with the pressure that is put on young people to succeed". He also said: "We have accepted this & have faith that somehow it will be used to glorify God". Ain't God grand?

Back Issues

OK - you asked for 'em, so here they are - the bng lost, almost legendary back issues of MCBF back in print. You'd better act fast - I don't intend to spend another evening like that in the copy shop soon. As always, all issues are 50¢ each, CASH ONLY. That means NO checks, NO money orders, MAYBE stamps. When ordering, & especially when subscribing, make sure to say exactly what issues you want - I have no memory. Enjoy.

include a 22¢ stamp with each order for postage.

1 The virgin issue. Lead story on that cute little cheerleader who got snuffed by her nice little friend in the suburbs that you saw in ROLLING STONE. Also: a lynching in San Jose & a look at that wonderful sub-genre of young adult literature, teen guilt novels. 16pp.

2 Lead story on the hideous torture/murder of Sylvia Likens (a John Waters' favorite). Also, the only tour guide you'll ever need to San Francisco (fuck cable cars - you want to see the People's Temple!), a survey of teen anorexia novels, and an excerpt from Ambrose Bierce's THE DEVIL'S DICTIONARY, and the last time I did movie reviews. 16pp.

3 The whole dirty story on Valerie Solanas's assassination attempt on ANDY WARHOL in '68. (Has she taken up nursing?) Also a very annoying centerfold, a stupid quiz which you'll never get, & an article on the late, great goddess of the paperback racks, V.C. Andrews. Everyone was still alive when this came out. 16pp.

4 The inside story of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge collapse, which was also the subject of a great newsreel. A critical bibliography of books about Ted Bundy, a shopper's guide to TRUE CONFESSION magazines, and a really sadistic nursery rhyme round things out. 16 PP.

5 The inside scoop on Fatty Arbuckle, the girl, & the Coke bottle. Also a great look at the Bible as exploitation literature, an article on noir-god writer Jim Thompson, a shopping guide to TRUE DETECTIVE mags, & Jim Ryan's immortal "Low-life Scum" cartoon. Last chance! This ish is in extremely short supply. 20 pp.

6 Probably the best article you'll ever read on that #1 typhoid carrier, Typhoid Mary. Also "Uncle John's Nature Corner", a look at Kenneth Anger's HOLLYWOOD BABYLON, an introduction to noir saint Cornell Woolrich, why I like STAR-HITS, and a neato anti-drug poster. (Who says I lack social conscience?). 20pp

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THE MURDER CAN BE FUN 1988 DATEBOOK - (out in December) A must for all you sickos out there, with a twisted event noted for every day of 1988, along with space to write your own appointments (or twisted events!). Samples:

April 23: "Mussolini's body stolen from grave, 1944"
November 11: "Charles Manson born, 1934"
January 15: "21 people drown in flood of molasses from ruptured storage tank, Boston, 1919

Get the picture? Something like these for every day of 1988. 56 pages, limited edition, only $2. Beat the rush & order now.

SPO

A soccer riot in Brussels le
English hooligans attacked

Something To Kill For

RTS

t 38 dead and 437 injured after
panic-stricken Italian partisans

Something To Die For

RAY CHAPMAN

	BATTING															BASERUNNING				PERCENTAGES			
Year	G	AB	H	2B	3B	HR	(Hm	Rd)	TB	R	RBI	BB	IBB	HBP	SH	SF	SB	CS	SB%	GIDP	Avg	Slug	On Base
1912	31	109	34	6	3	0	(0	0)	46	29	19	10		1	12		10				312	422	341
1913	140	508	131	19	7	3	(1	2)	173	78	39	46		2	48		29				258	341	298
1914	108	375	103	16	10	2	(0	2)	145	58	42	48		1	18		24	9	73		275	387	344
1915	154	570	154	14	17	3	(2	1)	211	101	67	70		3	29		36	15	71		270	370	338
1916	109	346	80	10	5	0	(0	0)	100	50	27	50		1	40		21	14	60		231	289	300
1917	156	583	170	28	12	3	(2	0)	231	98	36	61		0	67		52				302	410	334
1918	128	448	119	19	8	1	(0	1)	157	84	32	84		6	35		30				267	352	366
1919	115	433	130	23	10	3	(2	1)	182	75	53	31		3	50		18				300	420	317
1920	111	435	132	27	8	3	(1	2)	184	97	49	52		2	41		13	9	59		303	423	351
	1060	3785	1053	182	80	18	(8	8)	1429	671	364	452		19	340		233	47	67		278	378	332
6.5 yrs		584	162	25	12	3			220	104	56	70		3	52		36				278	378	332

Teams: Cleveland, 1912–1920.

Explanation for Gaps in Career or Sudden Changes in Productivity:

1914—Ankle injury.

1916—Injury described by 1917 *Reach Guide* as "broken bone," by 1969 Macmillan as "knee injury." The Indians were in first place at the time of the injury but fell apart following injuries to Chapman and two pitchers and finished sixth.

1920—Killed by pitch.

★ ★ Dying for the Team, pt. 2: Baseball ★ ★

Baseball fans are a smug lot, sorta the opera buffs of sports fandom. They don't go to some thinly disguised form of organized mayhem masquerading as "sport" for the pleasure of seeing some poor slob get maimed or killed. No, they'll tell you that they're there to watch the grace & beauty of that gentleman's game, baseball. Blood? Guts? Death? Destruction? They'll tell you that those are simply not part of the game.

Proving, if nothing else, that baseball fans have short memories. They've forgotten August 16, 1920.

Cleveland played the New York Yankees that day at the Polo Grounds in New York. Going into the top of the 5th, the Indians led, 3 - 0.

Leading off the 5th was the Indians' star shortstop, Ray Chapman. Carl Mays, the Yankees' big underhand pitcher, wound up & threw his first pitch, a high, hard, inside fastball. There was a loud crack, and the ball dribbled back towards the mound. Mays charged the ball, fielded it, whirled around, & threw it to 1st base. Then he noticed something wrong.

There wasn't any baserunner.

Chapman was lying across the plate. Instead of ducking away from the fastball, he'd leaned into the pitch & taken full on the side of his head. He was still concious, but, as his teammates helped him off the field, he collapsed. They immediatly called an ambulance.

Cleveland went on to win the game, with the hit batsman ultimately being the margin in the 4 - 3 victory. The papers that night only commented that Chapman had been injured, and would probably miss the rest of the season.

They weren't even half right. That lound, cracking noise had been the sound of his skull fracturing. A large piece was pressing against, & lacerating his brain. Although an operation was performed immediatly, he died at 5 AM the next morning.

Of course, the shit hit the fan. The game that day was cancelled so everyone could scream & yell at Mays. There was pressure mounting to have him tossed out of the league, and a group of players announced that they would refuse to play against him. Mays had to go to the DA to be cleared of manslaughter charges.

After a while, the excitement died down & Mays was formally cleared of unsporting play. An Accident, it was called. He was properly contrite. "I've always had a horror of hitting a player", though he certainly never let it stop him. He had led the league in hitting batters in 1917, & come damn close in 1918 & 1919. He eventually got over his guilt, & went back to pegging batters for another 9 years.

To date, Chapman remains the only man to ever be killed in a major league game, but he did not die in vain. His pinch runner did score the winning run, which is what really counts. Chapman just committed another sacrifice.

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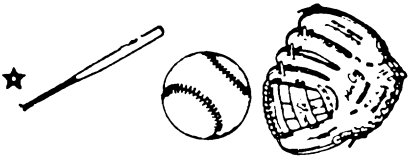

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The Dangers Of Playing For the Folks

by Chris Dufresne

The following essay originally appeared in the San Francisco Chronicle (8/20/86).

A FEW weeks ago in Huntington Beach, an angry parent rushed out of the bleachers during a youth league baseball game and allegedly decked a 16-year-old umpire over a "blown" call.

Recently in El Centro, the final eight games of a Little League season were canceled after another so-called adult jumped out of the stands and threatened an umpire with a knife.

The ballplayers in question here were 8-year-olds.

You hear stories like those and realize that nothing ever really changes, that too often the games of children are still played for adults. It was that way 20 years ago and probably 40 before that.

We all knew kids in Little League or Pop Warner football who kept one eye on the ball and one on the stands. We've heard stories of sons who played $20-a-homer with their dads. We all felt the aching tug in our stomachs when the bases were loaded and we were at bat.

It can be serious business, being a kid, especially for the ones who don't want to be out there in the first place.

Whenever I hear stories about kids and parents and sports, I can't help but think of a boy named Harold.

Harold was one of my teammates on a midget Pop Warner team in north Orange County. We were eighth-graders.

I didn't know him well, but I do know that Harold had no business playing football.

I didn't know his parents and can't begin to question their motives. I can't tell you why or even if they pushed their son out of the car every day for practice. As an eighth-grader with glowing red hair and swizzle sticks for legs, I had my own problems.

What I remember most about Harold is the sight of him crying. He cried almost every day.

Harold was a bona fide clod. His uniform hung on him like an oversized suit. He made a clanking sound when he ran, shoulder pads flapping underneath his jersey. Harold's pants drooped in the seat and his thigh pads roamed around his upper legs, protecting everything but his thighs.

When we ran wind sprints, Harold cried. When we crawled on all fours up the dirt hill behind our practice field, Harold cried. When we had tackling drills, Harold cried even more.

WE, OF COURSE, handled Harold with all the tact of eighth-graders. We knocked him around like a pinball. He was an easy target, and no matter how bad you were, you always looked better after tackling Harold.

When Harold cried, we laughed. With collective wit we reminded him daily that crying was for babies, not for ones so close to puberty.

That all changed one day.

There's a tackling drill in football in which two players lie flat on their backs about 10 yards apart. One player holds a ball. At the whistle, the players jump to their feet and run toward each other like two locomotives locked on the same track.

I had a good view when Harold and a guy named Jim took their places on the ground. I was next in line to tackle.

Harold held the ball against his stomach. The whistle blew and Harold ran toward Jim.

Jim hit him hard, helmet to helmet. We all cheered.

Harold didn't. Of course, he cried. Our coach ordered Harold to his feet and told him a few laps would shake the cobwebs from his head.

Harold took two steps and dropped to the ground.

Our coach cradled Harold in his arms but he wouldn't move. His eyes were wide open but they refused to blink.

I had never seen anyone die before.

We were ordered to run laps around the field for no other reason than to keep us from staring. We ran for what seemed like hours, watching as they finally carried Harold off the field to the hospital.

The next day, someone explained to us something about how a blood clot had formed in Harold's brain and that the blow to the head was fatal.

Jim wasn't there to hear it.

We gathered as a team and, for some reason, voted to continue the season. Some of our mothers begged us to quit, but the only one who did was Jim.

We went to the funeral and went on with our lives, but most of us will never forget what happened that day.

I hope I remember long enough to tell a son of mine.

RECENTLY, I drove past my old Little League field and watched as one minor leaguer took his position in right field. I wondered if he really wanted to be there.

Sometimes I'll think of Harold and wonder what might have become of him. He might have been a great lawyer or an accountant. Maybe a space scientist.

We all knew he couldn't play football. But then, he never said he could.

Snide Remarks

"Baseball has been very good to me, since I quit trying to play it."
-Whitey Herzog, baseball manager

"I believe in higher education - you know, 6'8", 6'9", 6'10"...
-Donald Gaines, college basketball coach

"If you make every gane a life & death proposition, you're going to have problems. For one thing, you'll be dead alot"
-Dean Smith, basketball coach.

"Grantland Rice, the great sportswriter, once said, "It's not whether you win or lose, it's how you play the game". Well, Grantland Rice can go to hell as far as I'm concerned"
-Gene Autry, owner

"Hotels have maids, baseball teams have coaches"
-Jose Martinez, coach

"It's Bowie Kuhn's job to make decisions. No one said he had to make any sense"
-LA Times editorial

"It is a comment on the anemic attendance in Seattle that fewer than 28,000 fans showed up to see Gaylord Perry's 300th win but 36,000 showed up a few days later to get free "funny nose glasses"
-Raymond Mungo, writer

"You can tell the NEW YORK TIMES to kiss my ass"
-Billy Martin to NY TIMES writer

"He drinks, snarls, bullies, throws dirt on umpires, and punches out marshmellow salesmen in bars. With these leadership qualities, it's no surprise that he's the greatest manager in baseball"
- Mike Royko on Billy Martin

"This is a violent sport. That's why the crowds love it"
-Vince Lombardi

"Winning isn't all that matters. I don't care how many games you win, it's how many championships you win that counts"
-Ed McCluskey, HS basketball coach.

HARRY EDWARDS

Those of you who still read the sports pages (masochism) will probably recognize Harry Edwards as the special consultant the baseball bigwigs hired to address the problem of blacks in managerial & executive positions in baseball. The problem? There aren't any. The solution, of course, is to hire a "head nigger on nigger affairs", have him hire a few well-publicized oreos, & then fire 'em all after all the fuss dies down.

If this is what all you little cynics are expecting, don't hold your breath. You obviously aren't familiar with the redoubtable Mr. Edwards. Not only does he not take any shit & makes a hell of a racket when someone tries to slip him some, he also hates sports. He probably hates 'em more, 'cos he knows alot more about 'em than you do.

Unlike many sports-haters, no one can accuse Edwards of looking for revenge against that high-school quarterback who was getting laid all the time in school. Back in college, he was a potential world-class discus thrower & a hatchet basketball player. He dropped track after telling the coach to fuck off, & only kept playing basketball to pay the tuition. He actually went to class, majored in sociology, & won a scholarship to Cornell for grad school. He wrote his doctoral thesis on the sociology of sport, & is currently a professor at UC Berkeley where, it is reported, he is not on best of terms with the athletic department.

Yeah, the man really can stir up the shit. Back in 1968, he headed up the Olympic Project For Human Rights, calling for all US black atheletes to boycott the Mexico City Olympics. Plans for the boycott were eventually scrapped in favor of a few symbolic protests at the Games by the athletes. For example, after Tommy Smith & John Carlos won medals in the 200m dash, they gave a black power salute -- an upraised, clenched fist -- on the victory stand during the playing of the national anthem. From the way people reacted, you would have thought they'd dropped their shorts & mooned the crowd. They were kicked out of Mexico so fast their heads spun, banned from amatuer sports for life, and practically lynched by the press.

Since then, Edwards has become the authority on what sports really are (& why), & what's wrong. The papers call him up every time another scandal errupts: $$, drugs, crime. He always points out that the problem isn't new -- it's just a case

of the bigwigs not "being able to hide the elephant in the pup tent", & how it's not going to go away - the problem, not just the symptom - until the idiot structure of society, & how that structure is reflected in sports, changes.

Over the years, he has published dozens of articles, as well as several books, hammering home his thesis and probably earning him the "commie pinko nigger" label in many coaching circles.

His first, and probably most accessible book, is REVOLT OF THE BLACK ATHELETE. Back in the '60s, coaches were having all kinds of problems with black players. They were boycotting, bitching, protesting, & just raising hell in general over everything from "institutionalized racism" to haircuts. Edwards explains why they were so pissed. Picture this. You get a scholarship to college. The coaches say, oh, we're so happy to see you, just stay in your place, don't try to join any frats, date any white girls, or get out of place. And don't worry about graduating, because we aren't worrying either! Edwards really tees off on all the great race scandals in sports during the '60s, including all the gory details about his Olympic boycott movement. & you thought it all ended with Jackie Robinson!

Unfortunately somewhat less accessible is THE SOCIOLOGY OF SPORT. Written as an upper-division college text introducing the subject, it isn't light reading, but it does have its rewards. This time, Edwards proceeds in an objective, analytical manner, studying the nature & structure of sports & contrasting it with what we think it is - the American Sports Creed. Need I say that the two are completely different animals? Just as a sample, such cherished chestnuts as "sports builds character" & "blacks are better jocks than whites" are shown to not be supported by any evidence. This book would make alot of sports writers feel stupid enough to switch to a more honest profession, say running numbers, if they had enough brains to understand it.

Probably his best, and definitely the most fun, is Edward's autobiography, THE STRUGGLE THAT MUST BE. Do not let the title put you off - this is not some 300-page sermon.

Edwards has led a very interesting life, marked by a less than idyllic involvement with sports. He was born in a really grungy East St. Louis ghetto. Sure, sports got him out - & would have put him right back in after he'd lost eligibility if he hadn't, without any encouragement, stuck his nose to the academic grindstone. He tells lotsa horror stories about sports & really gets into the slagging, so much that he makes this book required reading for his Sociology of Sport class, & no one thinks that it's a blatant move to push the prof's book. This book is one of the cornerstones of any sports hater's library.

And incidentally, if you ever get the chance to hear him speak, don't pass it up. He gives great lectures which don't exactly praise the local head coach. Look for him at high-school assemblies or college sociology classes. For some reason, the booster club just never invites him.

READ HARD OR DIE

PLAY IT AGAIN, BUD! by Bud Greenspan (Ballantine, 1974)
Sports History*
The Dempsey/Tunney "Long Count", the "fifth down", the "mystery punch" - the great controversies of sport, solved through enlarging newsreel footage. Do we care? Yes! Because most of these controversies are really HIDEOUS SCREW-UPS, blown-up frame-by-frame in loving detail. See Roy Riegels make that fateful U-turn in the '29 Rose Bowl, the Nazi girls dropping the baton in the '36 Olympic relays, and, of course, officials dragging a comatose Dorando Pietri across the marathon finish line. These would make great posters.

THE DAVID KOPAY STORY by David Kopay (Arbor, 1977)
sports auto-bio
Give this one to your least favorite quarterback. Kopay writes about his 10-year NFL career, and of coming out of the closet upon retirement. Right - a FAGGOT playing pro-football! & even better, he's not the only one! Will football ever recover?

SLAP SHOT by Richard Wooley (Berkeley, 1977)
movie tie-in
Gotta see the movie now. Broken down coach with even more broken down team drink, fight, & fuck their way through another losing season when The Miracle happens. 3 brothers join the team & revitalize it - and the entire town - by their winning ways (beating the shit out of the other team before the refs show up). Hockey purists will cringe.

THEY CALL ME ASSASSIN by Jack Tatum (Avon, 1979)
****sports bio****
This is not your standard sports bio. Tatum spend the first quarter of the book reminiscing about memorable "knockouts". (Note: the man plays football). Then, the obligatory ghetto background, some great Woody Hayes stories, & replies to all the people who want to lock Tatum up. Daryl Stingley is only mentioned towards the end, as being involved in an "unfortunate accident" with Tatum. Last I heard, Daryl had worked his way up to wiggling his big toe again.

THOSE ABOUT TO DIE by Dan Mannix (Ballantine, 1969)
history
Hockey, football, lacrosse, boxing - these have absolutely nothing on the Roman games. They completely did away with the competitinive veneer to give the mob what they really wanted from sports: death, in a 1001 variations. Christians vs. lions, human torches, etc. And, for a bit of lascivious variety, jackasses trained to rape Nubian virgins! As Mannix says, they "were probably the biggest argument against "spectator" sports that can be advanced".

GOD SAVE THE PLAYERS by Neil Offen (Playboy, 1974)
sociology of sport
What are sports fans? Offen paints them as just slightly out-of-whack normal people & tells all these nice little stories about their obsession. He's wrong. The nuts he writes about are all stupid, crazy, or both. Trust me.

SPORTS IN AMERICA by James Michener (Fawcett, 1976)
sociology of sport
Michener likes sports. However, he thinks sports, in America, are more than just a little bit fucked. He tells great horror stories about everything you can think of to hate: kid sports, pro sports, college sports, amatuer sports, women's sports. An extremely readable book, especially if you skip the parts where he suggests solutions.

RIP OFF THE BIG GAME by Paul Hoch (Anchor, 1982)
sociology of sport
No matter how much you hate 'em, Hoch hates 'em more, and rips 'em from a hard-line Marxist perspective. Sports are just a tool of the capitalist pigs, and "opiate of the masses", to keep 'em chained to the machines for 40 hours during the week. Athletes are just another group of exploited proletariats who should kick the owners out & own their own means of production. Athletes arise, all you have to lose are your jocks...

FOUL: THE LIFE OF CONNIE HAWKINS by David Wolf (Warner, 1972)
sports bio
Connie Hawkins was one of the best basketball players of the '60s. He was also kicked out of college & blacklisted by the NBA, & in general was screwed over for no particular reason. Guess pro-basketball isn't geared to benefitting the athelets. Required reading in Harry Edwards' classes.

THE BASEBALL HALL OF SHAME by Nash & Zullo (Wallaby, 1985)
sports records
That is, a sports records book for us. A selection of the most embarrasing, outrageous, stupid, or just plain inept momenst of America's most boring past-time. The Worst fielders, the most flagrant assaults, the dumbest players, the most ill-mannered fans -- they're all here. Also out: BHOS II and III, and THE FOOTBALL HALL OF SHAME.

THE STORY OF A YOUNG GYMNAST by Karen Jacobs (Bantam, 1979)
sports bio
This is called the pre-Olympic buildup. The story of champion US gymnast Tracee Talavera, our answer to Nadia & Olga, who was going to bring the gold medals back to us God-fearin' Americans in the 1980 Olympics. Heh heh. The ones we boycotted. This is called wasting ones youth.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

WHEN ALL THE LAUGHTER DIED IN SORROW by Lance Rentzel
THE SENSATION by Norman Keifetz
THE HARDER THEY FALL by Budd Schulberg
THE YEAR THE YANKEES LOST THE PENNANT by Doug Wallop
OUT OF THEIR LEAGUE by Dave Meggysey
HIGH FOR THE GAME by Chip Oliver
EIGHT MEN OUT by Eliot Asinof
CHEERLEADING & BATON TWIRLING
MEAT ON THE HOOF by Gary Shaw
DESTINY'S DARLINGS by Martin Rabolvsky
any FRANK MERRIWELL books by Burt L. Standish.

From:

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BIZARRO/By Piraro
I'VE GOT AN IDEA! LET'S STAND TOE TO TOE AND BEAT ON EACH OTHER WITH OUR FISTS UNTIL ONE OF US FALLS TO THE GROUND UNCONSCIOUS, AND CHARGE PEOPLE TO WATCH!
THAT'S RIDICULOUS, HAROLD. WHO'D PAY TO SEE THAT?

To: